



U.S. Immigration
and Customs
Enforcement

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News Release

**Business owner indicted for harboring, transporting illegal aliens
and money laundering in illegal employment scheme**
-- Suspect faces possible 40 years in prison and forfeiture of \$1.5 million --

FARGO, N.D. — The owner of an Indiana company that performed stucco-related services at construction sites in at least seven Midwest states has been charged with money laundering, harboring illegal aliens, transporting illegal aliens and making false statements, according to a 12-count criminal indictment unsealed in the District of North Dakota late yesterday.

The indictment is the result of an investigation by the Minot, N.D., office of U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE), with assistance from the U.S. Border Patrol, a division of U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP), and the North Dakota Highway Patrol. The case is being prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorney Nick Chase of the U.S. Attorney's Office for the District of North Dakota.

Robert Adrian Porcisanu, a 28-year-old citizen of Romania who is also known as Iulian Jijie, and his Franklin, Ind., business Stucco Design Inc., were indicted on one count of conspiracy to harbor illegal aliens, one count of conspiracy to transport illegal aliens, four counts of transporting illegal aliens, one count of conspiracy to launder money, three counts of money laundering, and two counts of making false statements.

If convicted, Porcisanu faces as many as 40 years in prison. The government also seeks the forfeiture of approximately \$1.5 million, which represents the proceeds of Porcisanu's illegal business activity.

"Employers who take advantage of illegal labor to gain a competitive advantage for their own profit will be identified, arrested and prosecuted," said Julie L. Myers, Department of Homeland Security Assistant Secretary for ICE. "ICE has no patience for employers who tolerate or perpetuate a shadow economy."

According to the indictment, Porcisanu and Stucco Design Inc. were able to undercut the bids of competitors and win contracts to perform stucco-related construction work with general contractors by taking advantage of cheaper labor costs resulting from the use of illegal alien employees.

The indictment further alleges that Porcisanu arranged for the transportation of his illegal alien employees and paid for hotel rooms for these employees near construction sites in North Dakota, Indiana, South Dakota, Minnesota, Michigan, Wisconsin and Ohio. The indictment also alleges that Porcisanu did not pay these employees overtime, and did not withhold state and federal taxes or Social Security taxes.

As part of an effort to conceal this illegal scheme, Porcisanu refused to respond to — and instructed others to refuse to respond to — a subpoena issued by a federal grand jury for the District of North Dakota seeking to obtain information about the legal status of his employees, the indictment alleges.

The ICE investigation began after the North Dakota Highway Patrol stopped a truck for a traffic violation near Fargo on Oct. 26, 2005. Highway patrol officers contacted the U.S. Border Patrol in Grand Forks for assistance in identifying the four men in the truck. Border Patrol agents responded and arrested the men on charges of being in the United States illegally.

All four illegal aliens were employees of Stucco Design Inc., and had been working in Dickinson, N.D., at a construction site for a Wal-Mart Super center. They told Border Patrol agents that, when Stucco Design hired them, they did not complete required paperwork and did not show documents to establish they were eligible to work legally in the United States, as required by law. They also stated that their employers knew they were in the country illegally.

Criminal indictments are only charges and not evidence of guilt. A defendant is presumed to be innocent unless and until proven guilty.

Today's indictment is the latest of series of recent criminal cases brought by ICE against businesses and business owners around the country in connection with illegal alien employment schemes.

- On April 19, 2006, ICE agents arrested seven current and former managers of IFCO Systems North America Inc, pursuant to criminal complaints in the Northern District of New York charging them with harboring illegal aliens for financial gain. Two other IFCO employees were arrested for criminal document fraud violations. ICE agents also apprehended 1,187 of the firm's illegal alien employees during criminal search warrants and consent searches executed at more than 40 IFCO locations nationwide. The arrests were the result of a year-long investigation of IFCO, which determined that more than half of IFCO's 5,800 employees during 2005 had invalid or mismatched Social Security numbers. If convicted, each current and former manager of IFCO faces a potential 10 years in prison and a fine of up to \$250,000 for each illegal alien with respect to whom the violation took place. IFCO is the largest pallet services company in the United States, based in Houston, Texas.
- On April 14, 2006, two operators of Baltimore's best-known sushi restaurants agreed to forfeit more than \$1 million in assets to the government and pleaded guilty to criminal charges of conspiracy to commit alien harboring and money laundering in connection with an illegal alien employment scheme. A third defendant pleaded guilty to the employment of illegal aliens. The ICE investigation found that the operators of the three Kawasaki restaurants in Baltimore exploited cheap, illegal labor to maximize profits in order to purchase new homes and luxury vehicles for themselves. Two of the defendants face sentences of up to 30 years in prison.
- On April 11, 2006, a federal indictment was unsealed in the Northern District of Ohio charging two temporary employment agencies and nine individuals with hiring and harboring illegal aliens, mail and wire fraud, and laundering approximately \$5.3 million. ICE agents arrested criminal suspects in Pennsylvania, New York and Ohio. The indictment alleged that HV Connect Inc. and TN Job Service Inc. provided hundreds of illegal alien employees to unwitting companies in Ohio by falsely representing that they were legal. The indictment also alleged that the owners of these temporary employment agencies laundered roughly \$5.3 million that they earned from this illegal employment scheme and used the proceeds to build a new home and purchase jewelry for themselves.

ICE

U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) was established in March 2003 as the largest investigative arm of the Department of Homeland Security. ICE is comprised of four integrated divisions that form a 21st century law enforcement agency with broad responsibilities for a number of key homeland security priorities.